Docket No. AUS920030435US1

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for dynamic access decision information
5   retrieval, the method comprising:
       receiving a request for access decision information
from an application, wherein the request identifies one
or more entitlement information items;
       determining an information provider for a given
10   entitlement information item within the one or more
entitlement information items;
       retrieving the given entitlement information item
from the information provider;
       forming a response, wherein the response includes
15   the one or more entitlement information items; and
       returning the container to the application.

2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:
       caching the retrieved given entitlement information
20   item in a local storage.

3.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:
       identifying a cached entitlement information item
within the one or more entitlement information item; and
25   retrieving the cached entitlement information item
from a local storage.

4.   The method of claim 3, wherein the cached
entitlement information is in the form of a container.

Docket No. AUS920030435US1

5.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of retrieving the given entitlement information item includes:

    generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval

5   client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider.

6.   The method of claim 5, wherein the retrieval client generates a protocol module and wherein the protocol

10   module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider using a provider specific protocol.

7.   The method of claim 5, wherein the retrieved given

15   entitlement information item is in the form of a container.

8.   The method of claim 1, wherein the application is an access manager.

20

9.   The method of claim 8, wherein the access manager includes a rules engine.

10.   The method of claim 1, wherein the response is an

25   extensible markup language document.

11.   An apparatus for dynamic access decision information retrieval, the apparatus comprising:

    receipt means for receiving a request for access

30   decision information from an application, wherein the

Docket No. AUS920030435US1

request identifies one or more entitlement information items;

determination means for determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within
5   the one or more entitlement information items;

retrieval means for retrieving the given entitlement information item from the information provider;

forming means for forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information
10   items; and

returning means for returning the container to the application.

12.   The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:
15   means for caching the retrieved given entitlement information item in a local storage.

13.   The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:
        means for identifying a cached entitlement
20   information item within the one or more entitlement information item; and

        means for retrieving the cached entitlement information item from a local storage.

25   14.   The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the cached entitlement information is in the form of a container.

15.   The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the retrieval means includes:

Docket No. AUS920030435US1

means for generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider.

5   16.   The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the retrieval client generates a protocol module and wherein the protocol module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider using a provider specific protocol.

10

17.   The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the retrieved given entitlement information item is in the form of a container.

15   18.   The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the application is an access manager.

19.   The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the response is an extensible markup language document.

20

20.   A computer program product, in a computer readable medium, for dynamic access decision information retrieval, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for receiving a request for access
25 decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies one or more entitlement information items;

instructions for determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within the one
30 or more entitlement information items;

Docket No. AUS920030435US1

     instructions for retrieving the given entitlement
information item from the information provider;

     instructions for forming a response, wherein the
response includes the one or more entitlement information

5 items; and

     instructions for returning the container to the
application.

     21. The computer program product of claim 20, further

10 comprising:

     instructions for caching the retrieved given
entitlement information item in a local storage.

     22. The computer program product of claim 20, wherein

15 the instructions for retrieving the given entitlement
information item include:

     instructions for generating a retrieval client,
wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given
entitlement information item from the information

20 provider.

     23. The computer program product of claim 22, wherein
the retrieval client generates a protocol module and
wherein the protocol module retrieves the given

25 entitlement information item from the information
provider using a provider specific protocol.

     24. The computer program product of claim 22, wherein
the retrieved given entitlement information item is in

30 the form of a container.

Docket No. AUS920030435US1

25. The computer program product of claim 20, wherein the response is an extensible markup language document.